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4 June 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Strategic Research

SUBJECT : Ikle Proposal to the DCI

1. Dr. Proctor asked SEC to review and comment on the proposal from Fred Ikle, Director of ACDA, and specifically to suggest what response the DCI could make. Following are my opinions on the subject.

2. The Ikle proposal is similar to many other memoranda that have been directed to the DCI, DDI et al. and contain suggestions about things we ought to be doing to obtain better insights into Soviet strategic policies and perceptions. His suggestions are rather loosely formulated and not precise, but apparently he believes we might better inform our understanding of the Soviet weapons acquisition process by doing case studies of particular decisions and otherwise looking at rather narrowly focused questions and issues.

3. He includes an attachment which is a set of broadly framed questions about the relative influence of military and political considerations in Soviet force planning and SALT policy; the low readiness of Soviet strategic forces; the relationship between SALT policy and detente objectives; etc. Alternative answers are provided which illustrate that logically consistent but quite different responses are possible for the same question. Ikle also appends some 20 additional questions which pretty well cover the waterfront -- e.g., Is the Soviet SALT position conditioned by the external political environment? Why have the Soviets conducted so many fewer underground nuclear tests than has the US?

4. Ikle's proposal is not unreasonable. The problem is how to get the Ikles, Marshalls, Lodals, etc. to appreciate the limitations of our resources. Their ability to generate new questions (or the same questions over again) seems unbounded. Last month, for example, A. W. Marshall

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suggested a wide ranging investigation of [redacted] practices, and this week he has asked for more attention to a large number of analytical and data gaps related to conventional forces.

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5. Perhaps what is most frustrating for the analyst at the working level is the fact that he is repeatedly ordered to provide a comprehensive treatment of broad issues within a short deadline, while at the same time he is asked to accomplish fundamental studies of particular cases. A perfect example is the study requested by the NSC through Howard Stoertz and due by 20 June. The concerns of Mr. Stoertz and the NSC are essentially the same as those of Fred Ikle. The time frame and research and analytical approach are dramatically different. Theoretically we should strike a rational balance between the two kinds of activity. In practice the ad hoc demands for fast responses drive out the planned research effort.

6. At present SEC has all it can handle in the strategic arena. The Stoertz memo will require an all out crash effort over the next two weeks, and it is unlikely that NSSM-191 support will end at that point. We are also trying to complete the special study on Soviet and Chinese reactions to US nuclear policy as tasked by NSDM-242. The two analysts who have been working off and on over the past 14 months on Andy Marshall's Soviet perceptions project are trying to complete this task to his satisfaction. One of these men returns to active duty with the Airforce in July. NIE 11-3/8 is now upon us. Finally we will be continually tasked with short run SALT support. I see little prospect that in the near term we could make a senior analyst available for a sustained effort along the lines suggested by Ikle, unless our responsibilities for participation in SALT support, the NSSM process and NIE production were substantially reduced.

[redacted]

Acting Chief
SEC/OSR

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Attachment:

Correspondence from Fred C. Ikle

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5 June 1974

Ed --

Hank raises a good point. The problem we face here is in large measure the problem we faced in how to get deep political research out of the system.

The solution is probably the same -- insulate the military researchers. This is not being done and as long as SEC is in the midst of the policy-support business it won't be.


Paul

MEMORANDUM FOR: DDI

Ed:

This memo, I think, is a fair description of the situation confronting the Strategic Evaluation Center. I simply must take steps to protect it from being overwhelmed by diverse requirements before it is adequately staffed and organized.

I suggest that we respond by thanking them for their questions and suggestions which we shall use as consumer guidance and background in doing our work.


E. H. KNOCHE

4 June 1974
(DATE)

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1 AUG 54 WHICH MAY BE USED.

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